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Leading Concordia

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Introduction

Welcome to the first issue of the Human Resources and Employee Relations quarterly publication for managers and supervisors entitled *Leading Concordia*. The successful launch of *Connecting*, the newsletter aimed at all employees illustrated that there is a need for an additional publication to fill the communication gap for managers. As a result, this newsletter was born.

Studies have shown that the most important component to successful organizations and retention of key staff is the quality of the relationship between an employee and his/her supervisor/manager. As HR's primary role is to support supervisors and managers we hope that this publication will assist you with information on HR initiatives and programs that support you and add to your managerial knowledge and skills. As such, we would like to know what topics are of interest to you. Leadership, succession planning or empowerment could be topics for our next issues. For this reason, we would like to hear from you. Please let us know what you would like to read about by e-mailing us at leading@concordia.ca.

As with *Connecting*, our publication schedule will be quarterly, and as always, your comments and feedback will be most appreciated.

Compensation@Concordia

Compensation is a complex issue, especially at Concordia University, where there are 11 bargaining units (or unions). Most employees think of financial remuneration (or money) when they hear the word compensation, but it goes much deeper than that.

Compensation includes wages and non-monetary benefits, both tangible and intangible. It is a combination of payment methods to reward employees for their hard work, such as paid vacation days, health insurance, stock options, group RRSPs, pension plans, and flex-time.

It is clear that there are a number of factors contributing to the calculation of compensation in general.

Concordia's Job Evaluation Process, affectionately known as JEP, was introduced in 1989. Although it was seen as a major breakthrough at that time, it has since garnered criticism for its lack of flexibility and transparency, its failure to provide a mechanism for merit pay for those who go the extra mile and some claim it could be manipulated in a way that is unfair to others in the same type of position. "JEPping" a job is a long process that can take six weeks or more. With any new initiative, the turnaround should be dramatically reduced to only a number of days.

Since then, many new tools have become available, but major work was required to find an appropriate evaluation system that could be fine-tuned to Concordia's needs.

At the request of Cabinet, a committee was struck. Harold Murphy, Manager of Compensation Services, invited a cross section of university employees to sit on the committee. All union presidents were invited to take part in the process, and all but one agreed. *Suzanne Downs, president of CUSSU, says such issues will be considered at the bargaining table, and not elsewhere.*

Committee members came from all over the university, ensuring a representative collection of individuals from each area, including all academic Faculties; the Services; Facilities Management; the Libraries; and all but one bargaining unit.

The members are:

- Harold Murphy, Project Leader, Compensation Services
- Line Bonenfant, Compensation Services
- Barbara Harris, Arts & Science
- Clara Paradisis, Engineering & Computer Science
- Barbara Henchey, Fine Arts
- Tony Patricio, Fine Arts
- Marilyn Howell, John Molson School of Business
- Joanne Beaudoin, School of Graduate Studies
- Kali Sakell, School of Graduate Studies
- Pat Pietromonaco, Facilities Management

(continued on next page)

Concordia UNIVERSITY

Real education for the real world

Compensation@Concordia (cont'd.)

- Nathalie Laporte, Finance
- Jean-Marc Edwards, Libraries
- Lillian Rubenlicht, Libraries
- Robert Scardera, Purchasing
- Patricia Posius, Services
- Kathleen O'Connell, ACUMAE
- Miriam Posner, ACUMAE
- Lina Lipscombe, ACUMAE
- Robert Black, CULEU
- Irene Fernandez, CULEU
- Geoff Selig, CUPEU
- Eddy Ginocchi, SGW Trades Union
- Martin Dicaire, SGW Trades Union
- Denis Dumont, Loyola Trades Union
- Constantino Maruca, Loyola Trades Union
- Elaine Denis, Technicians' union
- Ralph Carter, Technicians' union

Watson Wyatt was the firm chosen to deliver a tool to assess positions and assign them to role families and role streams. They are a recognized and trusted HR consultancy firm. Our consultant at Watson Wyatt is Bob Curry.

Concordia started with approximately 2,500 distinct positions, which are now organized into 11 role families and 6 role streams, and have been boiled down to 98 *well-defined, broadly-based* generic roles.

A role family is a group of activities that deliver services to diverse clients. Concordia's role families are:

- Financial Services
- Student Academic Success Services
- Academic and Research Services
- Strategic Management Services
- Faculty Excellence Services
- Business Development, Funding and Communication Services
- Data Management, Instructional and Network Services
- Facilities & Physical Resources Management Services
- Arts and Cultural Services
- Operational Services
- Human Resources Services

A role stream is a collection of closely related roles determined by the levels of responsibility, accountability, decision-making and role impact. Concordia's role streams are:

- Executive Management
- Supervisory and Managerial
- Counselling and Advising
- Analytical and Technical
- Information Delivery and Administrative Support
- Operations

For example, the current position of Secretary/Receptionist for Human Resources & Employee Relations would fall into the Human Resources role family and the Information Delivery and Administrative Support role stream.

McGill University underwent a similar process, where they reduced their individual job descriptions to a handful of families and streams, but did so for managerial and support staff only. They did not consider other types of employees, as Concordia is doing.

The committee is now addressing intrinsic compensation, and is also examining best practices in employee motivation, recognition and appreciation programs.

JEP was merely a job evaluation tool, not a program, explains Murphy. This new compensation project will encompass all aspects of compensation and will be well-tuned to Concordia's specific needs. We will have new methods to motivate employees, and reward systems for those who put in extra effort.

The proposed compensation program has been designed to bring back the leadership of many compensation management related issues to the hands of those directly involved.

Although the professional Compensation Team will continue to provide advice and counselling on the management of the program, its main activity will be to improve diverse applications in support of Concordia's strategies and control the overall equity.

As managers, it is important that you familiarize yourself with this new initiative because it will empower you by providing information for succession/career planning; providing a transparent process to evaluate and compare positions, maintain equity within your own group and across Concordia; and, providing tools to motivate and support employees' good performance and address salary progression needs.

All managers are invited to discuss this project with any team member or the project leader. The committee is interested in hearing about Concordia's best practices in employee recognition and appreciation.

The committee is also interested in getting support from staff and faculty to launch this initiative successfully and to make sure it runs smoothly. Managers are especially important in this process. As they are the end users of this new compensation model, it is essential to have managerial input regarding the design, and how to better support their unit mission. Managers will not only need to understand how the system works, but will want to be able to use it to their advantage, and to be able to explain it to their employees.

Should you have any questions, concerns or comments, please contact Harold Murphy at ext. 3669 or by email at murphyh@alcor.concordia.ca.

"HOW DO I DO THIS?"

Have you ever assigned a task or project to an employee that you thought they could already do and that employee asks you "How do I do this?" What do you do then? Start by asking the employee "I thought that you had been handling this task for a while. What procedures have you been following?" Hopefully, the employee was thinking of several different ways of doing the task and was asking which one you favoured. If this is the case, discuss the options and decide together which is best.

On the other hand, if the employee was really asking how to do it, then you have a few options. You could simply write instructions on how to do the task, and monitor the employee. You could also assign someone to teach the employee how to do it, or if the task or project is too difficult or the deadline is too soon, then you could assign the task to someone else.

Lastly, is it important you follow up. If you were mistaken about this employee's skills set, you might have a false impression of your employees' expertise. The solution is a simple one: you need to increase your daily face time with them so that you can have a better idea of their actual skills.

HOW TO PRAISE EMPLOYEES EFFECTIVELY:

- Don't hide your praise behind criticism.
- Make your praise personal.
- Be sincere.
- Do it as often as it is warranted.
- Be specific.

TIPS ON HOW TO BE A GREAT MANAGER:

- Develop a positive vision.
- Think big.
- Encourage others to do their best.
- Set and maintain high expectations for all who work with you.
- Try to get your point across as politely as possible.

SUPERVISORS: DON'T TAKE THEM FOR GRANTED

Are you managing supervisors who in turn manage employees? If yes, it is worthwhile to think about the special problems they face.

- Remember their special position.
- Communicate regularly.
- Respect confidentiality.
- Help them develop.

Wellness is not a passing fad

The Wellness event, Making Time for Us, may be over, but that does not mean Wellness Concordia has given up! Our employees' well-being, or wellness, is a constant concern.

Did you know that happy employees are more productive than unhappy employees? Employees who enjoy their jobs are absent less, produce better quality work, and make better decisions. They also create a congenial working atmosphere. The bottom line is that happy employees positively affect the bottom line!

Here at Concordia, we have scores of great people with great ideas. There are a number of initiatives that benefit employees across the university, but it can be hard to find them. Hence, the Wellness website.

The Wellness site is a repository of information aimed solely at Concordia employees. There are announcements of events, suggestions for workshops from colleagues, a page of resources available to Concordians and contact information for Wellness Concordia. Be sure to check it out: http://Wellness.Concordia.ca. If you or your department offers a service or activity that may contribute to someone else's wellness, please let us know and we can add it to our resource page.

The Wellness site will be continually updated with articles and suggestions from colleagues. Joanne Spinelli e-mailed Wellness Concordia about the walking program that used to be run by a nurse from Health Services. As a result, we are looking for others who would be interested in walking to keep fit and want to socialize with colleagues at the same time. If you or a member of your staff is one of them, please let us know!

Wellness Concordia wants your input.

Now that Making Time for Us is over, Wellness Concordia will take a look back to see what worked, what didn't, and how to improve it for next time.

Yes, next time!

In order to make it a success, we want to hear about your experiences – good or bad! What would you like to see, and when? Should workshops be held during work time, employee time, or a combination of both?

Help us help you by telling us what you need.

Coaching

Did you know that you have an enormous and direct impact in your one-on-one communications with your employees? In fact, one's supervisor has the potential to strengthen an employee's relationship to the job and the university. For example, if an employee feels that his manager is looking out for him, has his interests and goals in mind, and can help reach his goals, chances are the employee will bring more loyalty and spirit to their workplace.

As a manager, one of your most important roles consists of coaching your employees. It is vital that you realize that your employees look up to you. You need to strongly support them in their development and discuss their long term goals with them. As a manager, you need to realize that their achievements are also your achievements.

Coaching can be defined as an opportunity to contribute to another person's development and, it is also the mutual sharing of experiences and opinions to create agreed-upon outcomes. Coaching can be used in many ways. For example, it can be used for developing skills, providing answers, facilitating problem solving, building self-confidence, encouraging employees to learn on their own, and serving as a resource for others.

If you have an employee who is looking for ways to grow professionally, or if you are beginning to plan your succession, consider the Individual Development Program (IDP). Working with the employee and an employment advisor, you will determine the employee's strengths, skills and deficiencies, and you can plan on fine-tuning them to be better trained for a promotion or new responsibilities. For more information, visit http://hr.concordia.ca/eed/traininganddev/.

Coaching Tip: Ask a lot of open-ended questions. Most managers ask too few. Open-ended questions invite participation and idea sharing. For example, you can ask: "What would happen if…" or "How do you feel about your progress to date?" Remember that coaching is not an opportunity to correct someone's behaviour or actions.

Have you ever wondered how you can add value to your job?

Begin by asking yourself: "If this were my money instead of the university's, would I spend it this way?" Then apply it to everything from your expense accounts to new office furniture.

CAREER ADVISING

If you believe that one of your employees would benefit from more career coaching than you can give, Human Resources & Employee Relations has established a new unit called Career Services, and Matt Santateresa is ready to take on the challenge.

Matt received graduate training in career development at Royal Roads University in Victoria, B.C., and interned at La Passerelle Career Transition Centre in Montreal.

Reporting to the Director of Employment and Employee Development, Matt will help staff members "gain a better perspective of their strengths, and apply this self-knowledge in a resourceful way."

Career advising at HR is a voluntary service, and the advising process adheres to a strict ethical code that ensures the employee's privacy.

"Providing a safe and comfortable environment for discussion is important, so I am available by appointment at any time of the workday or during lunch hours and outside of working hours," Matt explained.

"We all know the cost of courses," Matt said. "Some professional training is expensive and runs into hundreds, maybe thousands of dollars. Every employee should jump at the opportunity offered by the Individual Development Plan — I did. It's a chance to increase your skills and marketability."

If you're interested in setting up an appointment or discussing your career path, contact Matt Santateresa at ext. 3298 or email him at terrys@alcor.concordia.ca.

Determining language and computer requirements

All positions at Concordia require a certain level of language and computer proficiency. If you or your department plans on posting a position in the near future, you will want to know about these levels in order to accurately define the job requirements. To assist you in determining the level of proficiency necessary to perform adequately in a certain position, have a look at the following examples.

Concordia's language evaluation system, for both oral and written abilities, is based on five levels where level five is the highest level of proficiency. Although there is not enough space to print the entire set of levels, a short description of every level is given below. To find the entire set, visit http://hr.concordia.ca/eed/online_guides/pdf/hr_guide_LangProf.pdf.

Main characteristics of writing abilities

Levels	Abilities
Level 1	Ability to write is too limited to convey a clear message, even a very simple one. Very little or no knowledge of the language.
Level 2	Ability to write isolated words, phrases, simple statements, or questions on very familiar topics to provide basic information.
Level 3	Ability to write short descriptive or factual texts. Structure can be awkward, and the meaning is sometimes obscured.
Level 4	Ability to write texts in which the ideas are developed and presented in a coherent manner. Vocabulary, grammar, and spelling are generally appropriate, but errors are still present.
Level 5	Ability to write a variety of texts to communicate complex ideas. The person demonstrates mastery of grammar and structure and draws upon a wide vocabulary.

Main characteristics of oral interaction abilities

Levels	Abilities
Level 1	Ability to speak the language is too limited to communicate ideas even in very simple situations.
Level 2	Ability to answer and ask simple questions and to produce simple, often incorrect sentences. Speaks the language a little, with much difficulty.
Level 3	Ability to carry an informal conversation on concrete topics. Speaks the language with some difficulty.
Level 4	Ability to participate in discussions on a variety of topics and to expand on them with relative ease. Delivery is natural. Speaks the language with little difficulty.
Level 5	Ability to express ideas effectively in all situations, true or hypothetical. Ability to maintain a high level of oral production at a normal speed. Excellent control of the language and high degree of ease in delivery and interaction. Very few minor errors, if any. Meaning is never obscured. Speaks the language with ease.

There are three proficiency levels for computer skills: beginner, intermediate and advanced. Each application has its own set of competencies that must be mastered before moving on to the next level. Each of the following Microsoft Office applications has its own set of competencies: Word, PowerPoint, Excel and Access. Here are examples in Word and Excel of skills and which level they apply to. If you would like to view the complete skills for all four applications, visit http://hr.concordia.ca/eed/online_guides/pdf/hr_guide_CompSkills.pdf.

Word

Levels	Skills
Beginner	Create a new document, enter text and save it Format characters and paragraphs Work with tabs, indents, margins, lists, spacing Create and edit tables Print documents, envelopes and labels
Intermediate	Work with sections, create templates, use styles, and customize them Create Mail Merges, sort and filter them Run and record Macros Create a web page based on a template and add hyperlinks
Advanced	Work with advanced styles and AutoFormat features, linking styles Work with very large documents that require a table of contents, footnotes, endnotes, and cross-references Manage Macro commands, create dialogue boxes and understand the notions of Visual Basic Application programming

Excel

Levels	Skills
Beginner	Open files and use page setup Format cells, rows, and columns Use simple arithmetic functions in the formulas
Intermediate	Create, modify, and format charts Filter data and manage a filtered list Use mathematical, logical, statistical, and financial functions Group and dissociate data and perform interactive analysis
Advanced	Use advanced functions (Names, VLOOKUP, IF, IS) Work with Pivot Tables Manage Macro commands and perform some programming in VBA

If you are having difficulty deciding what language or computer skills you need in your new job posting, please do not hesitate to visit the Employment and Employee Development webpage at http://hr.concordia.ca/eed/.

Psychological harassment

Did you know that on June 1, 2004, the Act respecting Labour Standards (L.S.A.) was amended to include provisions regarding psychological harassment and that Québec was the first province to adopt such legislative provisions? Did you attend one of the sessions offered by Human Resources and Employee Relations on the subject?

Rights and obligations of the parties

According to this Act, "every employee has a right to work in an environment free from psychological harassment." Consequently, it states that "employers must take reasonable action to prevent psychological harassment and, whenever they become aware of such behaviour, to put a stop to it."

Psychological harassment defined

The legislation defines " 'psychological harassment' as any vexatious behaviour in the form of repeated and hostile or unwanted conduct, verbal comments, actions or gestures, that affects an employee's dignity or psychological or physical integrity and that results in a harmful work environment for the employee." Furthermore, "a single serious incidence of such behaviour that has a lasting harmful effect on an employee may also constitute psychological harassment."

From this definition, there are four elements:

1. **The victim must allege harassing conduct.** The behaviour in question must be vexatious. Maliciousness or intent to harm are not determining factors.
2. **A vexatious behaviour can take many forms.** Psychological harassment can result from one or all of the following: unwanted conduct, verbal comments, actions or gestures, a hostile or undesired act.
3. **Repetitive nature.** There has to be more than one occurrence over time without necessarily having to be incessant.
4. **In certain circumstances, one single event may constitute harassment.** That event must cause repercussions over time for the victim.

Sources of psychological harassment come in many forms; horizontal, vertical and external. Additionally, the number of persons may vary. For instance, harassment may occur between two persons, a group of employees that gangs up on one person, two groups may harass each other, or a limited number of persons may inflict psychological harassment upon a single employee or a group of persons. Harassment may occur among employees; or persons in a position of authority may harass subordinates or, conversely, employees may harass their supervisors. Thus, many variations of psychological harassment exist.

Examples:
Contexts that may generate psychological harassment include the following:

1. Abuse of authority
2. Lack of communication
3. Mobbing
4. Unaddressed (personality) conflicts
5. Workload

Psychological harassment may have serious consequences for the victim and the university. This may result, for example, in a high rate of absenteeism and turnover, the loss of qualified and loyal employees and management personnel, and legal fees.

Consequently, it is important for managers to identify situations of psychological harassment and to intervene as quickly as possible.

Recourse and means of prevention

Every employee is psychologically harassed and who is governed by a collective agreement must exercise the recourse that is provided for in the agreement, namely the grievance procedure.

Individuals who are not covered by a collective agreement must exercise the recourse provided for by the Labour Standards Commission. Individuals must file a complaint in writing to the Commission. Upon receipt of such a complaint, the Commission must investigate.

Prevention

Concordia University established an internal complaint procedure which is available at http://hr.concordia.ca/policies_procedures/pdf/harassment-procedures.pdf. Briefly, it states that if you believe you are a victim of psychological harassment, you should report the occurrence to your hierarchical superior. If the complaint of discrimination and/or harassment involves your hierarchical superior, you must report to the next person up in the hierarchy.

For more information on psychological harassment, do not hesitate to contact Shelagh Peden, employee relations assistant, and you will be directed to the appropriate person.

ASK THE EDITORS

As part of our renewed commitment to become user-friendly and accessible, Assistant Vice-President, Human Resources and Employee Relations, Gilles Bourgeois has the pleasure of announcing the appointment of Ms. Caroline Danis and Ms. Shelagh Peden to the position of Communications Coordinator for the department of Human Resources and Employee Relations.

Your comments, suggestions and questions are welcome. Here's how to reach us:

Email:
cdanis@alcor.concordia.ca or
shelagh@alcor.concordia.ca

Phone:
(514) 848-2424 ext. 4177

Fax:
(514) 848-2844

Caroline Danis /
Shelagh Peden,
Human Resources and
Employee Relations,
S-ER 500

Design | Concordia Marketing Communications E3030